June 23, 2005

Memo to:

John Thomas, USACE

Sue Homewood, NCDWQ

From:

Kristina Solberg, PE PDEA Project Manager

Subject:

U-2525 B and C Greensboro Northern and Eastern Loop

Guildord County, Project No. 6.498003T

'Pipeline' project entering the Merger 01 Process

Meeting:

Wednesday, July 6, 2005

2:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Room 470 (PDEA Conference Room), Transportation Building

Raleigh

The Greensboro Northern and Eastern Urban Loop is a pipeline project for which the environmental documents were completed before the Merger 01 process was initiated. Most, if not all agency representatives, are new to this project. This project may also be referenced under TIPs U-2525A and I-2402D.

The purpose of the July 6th meeting is to determine where this project should enter the Merger 01 process. The purpose of this memo is to provide background information that will help facilitate discussion during the upcoming meeting.

Environmental Documents:

Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)
Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS)
Record of Decision (ROD)
August 19, 1992
August 12, 1994
March 7, 1995

At the July 6th meeting NCDOT will present an aerial with a 1000-foot wide corridor and an alignment of the horizontal design for the Middle Alternative and available environmental features mapping. Biologists recently completed fieldwork delineating the streams and wetlands and are currently compiling the information with the final report due in August 2005. A historic architecture and archaeological investigation has been requested.

The proposed action for the FEIS is the construction of the Greensboro Eastern/Northern Urban Loop, a multi-lane freeway. The proposed limits are from north of the interchange with I-85 and the proposed I-85 Bypass to Lawndale Drive north of Greensboro. The project is approximately 12.5 miles in

length. The selected alternative is the Middle Alternative. This alternative and its anticipated impacts are fully discussed in the DEIS and abbreviated FEIS.

Purposes

The main purposes of the proposed Greensboro Eastern/Northern Urban Loop are to provide an efficient circumferential connection for major arterial thoroughfares such as I-85, I-40, US 29, and US 70; and to improve service for local traffic in Eastern and Northern Greensboro/Guilford County. The project also will connect to other portions of the planned Greensboro Urban Loop.

Preferred Alternative

The following information concerns the determination of the Preferred Alternative for the referenced project (*From NCDOT memorandum to E. Lusk from W. A. Barrett, dated January 5, 2005*):

The FEIS for TIP U-2525 included evaluation for the entire Eastern/Northern Urban Loop, from north of the I-85 interchange/proposed I-85 Bypass to Lawndale Drive, approximately 12.5 miles. The FEIS identified three (3) 'nobuild' alternatives: 1) a No-Build Alternative, 2) a Transportation System Management Alternative, and 3) a Multi-Modal Systems Alternative. These 'no build' alternatives' were determined to not satisfy the purpose for and need of the project and were not retained for detailed study.

The FEIS for TIP U-2525 identified four (4) 'build alternatives': 1) a Widening Existing Alternative, 2) an Eastern Alternative, 3) a Middle Alternative, and 4) a Western Alternative. Two (2) Crossover Alternatives, which would allow for the possible combination of portions of the Eastern, Middle and Western alternatives were also included in the discussion of the 'build alternatives'. The Widening Existing Alternative, the Western Alternative and the two Crossover Alternatives were excluded as Preferred Alternatives for the following reasons:

- The 'Widening Existing Alternative' was determined to not be compatible with the adopted Thoroughfare Plan and did not offer a cost-effective solution to the purpose of and need for the project, and was therefor not retained for detailed study.
- The 'Western Alternative' was eliminated based on its impact on wetlands, residential relocations, and the location of the City of Greensboro's White Street Landfill.
- The identification of the Preferred Alternative for the I-85 Bypass (TIP I-2402) eliminated the need for Crossover 2.
- The elimination of the 'Western Alternative' eliminated the need for Crossover

The 'Eastern Alternative' and the 'Middle Alternative were further evaluated for determination of the preferred alignment. The Middle Alternative was selected as the Preferred Alternative based on the analysis of the environmental impacts

presented in the DEIS; citizen comments received at the Corridor Public Hearing; and review comments from federal, state, and local agencies. The FEIS listed the following reasons for the selection of the Preferred Alternative:

- Compatibility with the established Thoroughfare Plan.
- Fewer residential and business relocations.
- Fewer acres of prime farmland.
- No relocation of churches.
- No impacts to school.
- Minimizes impact to McLeansville.
- · Compatibility with land use plan.
- Fewer noise impacts
- Better access to Kmart Distribution Center (major truck traffic generator).

The NCDOT Permit Application for TIP No. U-2525A /I-2440D, dated 9/20/96 (which also included the widening and relocation of a segment of US 70) expounded upon the basis for the Middle Alternative selection with discussion of the following three points:

- 1) Impacts to the McLeansville Community the community had very strong opposition to the Eastern Alternative as they believed it was intrusive and disruptive to their rural lifestyle ('noise walls' were determined to not be a viable option). The NCDOT considered the input of affected citizens an important factor during the decision making process.
- Impacts to Replacements Ltd., Inc. during the document phase of the project, and prior to the selection of a preferred alternative, the Replacements Ltd., Inc. constructed a large, specially designed building along I-85 to house fine china and crystal. Based on the estimates to acquire the building/property and to relocate the business being in excess of \$5 million (this did not include all costs), and based on opposition from customers of the business (which were founded on the costs to taxpayers and the inconvenience to customers), the NCDOT determined that the I-85/I-85 Bypass Interchange (TIP No. I-2402D) should be relocated to avoid impacting the business.
- Alignment of I-85/I-85 Bypass Interchange The alignment for the Middle Alternative could be revised to accommodate the relocation of the interchange without compromising the design criteria for the roadway (as well as avoiding cutting through a minority neighborhood). However, the Eastern Alternative could not accommodate the shift without an undesirable "dog-leg" design, which would defeat the purpose of shifting the alignment.

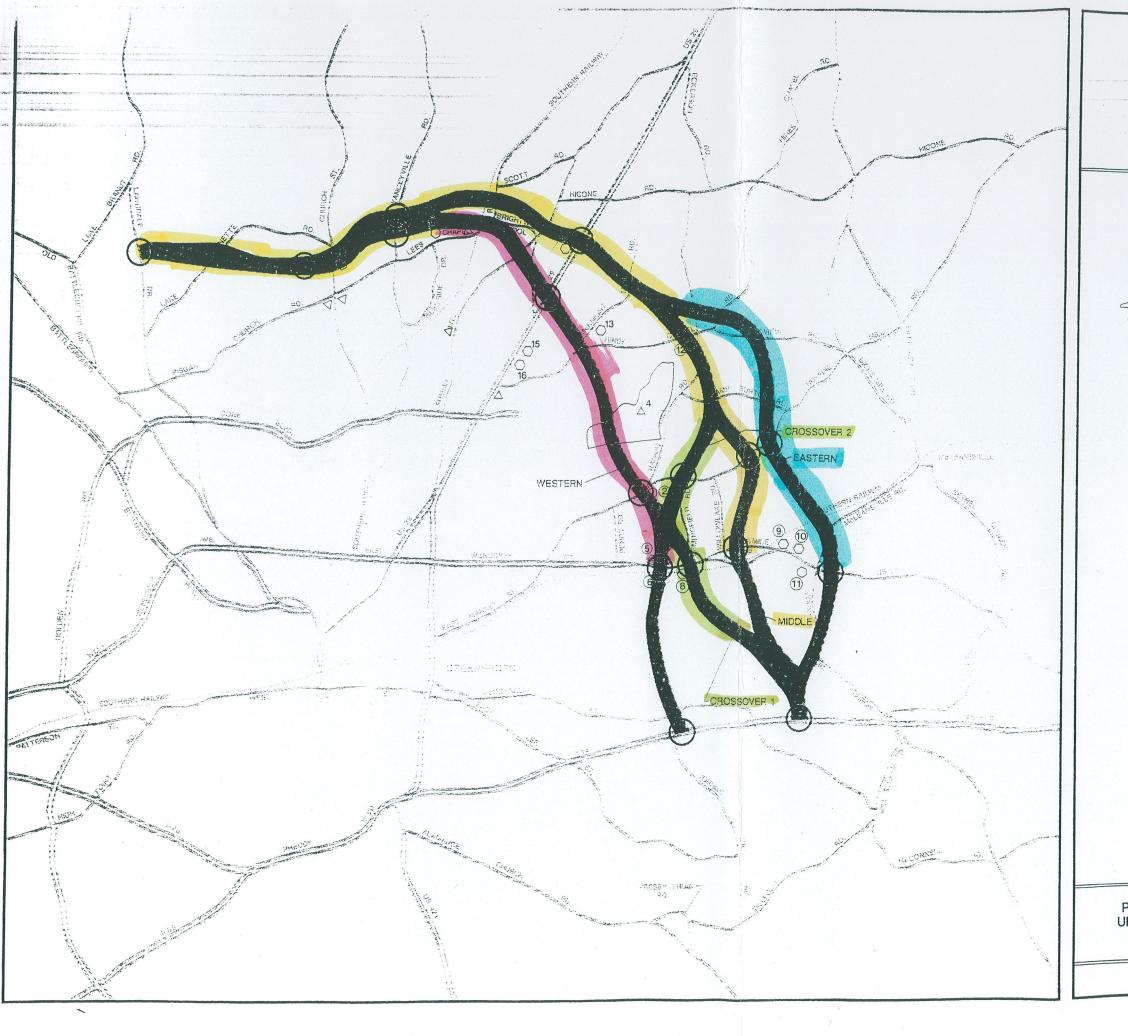
Additionally, the permit application noted that the Middle Alternative better serves the existing major generators of heavy truck traffic in the area and the planned future commercial/industrial development for the area.

The Permit Application included the following additional influencing factors, most of which were included in the FEIS:

- Compatibility with the established Thoroughfare Plan.
- Compatibility with the land use plan.
- No relocation of churches.
- · No impacts to schools.
- · Fewer residential and business relocations.
- Fewer impacts to prime farmland.
- Fewer noise impacts.

The NCDOT determined that although the Middle Alternative impacts an estimated 2.6 acres more of wetlands than does the Eastern Alternative, the Middle Alternative is considered to be the least environmentally damaging, most practicable alternative of the two alternatives when all of the factors are considered.

PDF Attachment - Project Breakdown Map



GREENSBORO EASTERN/NORTHERN URBAN LOOP

GUILFORD COUNTY, NC

LEGEND

O POTENTIAL HAZARDOUS MATERIALS SITE (Refer to Table III-7)

- △ LANDFILL SITE
- WHITE STREET LANDFILL
- ② UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANK LOCATION (Refer to Table III-7)

2000 0 2000 4 Scale Fe

POTENTIAL HAZARDOUS MATERIALS, UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANKS, AND LANDFILL SITES

FIGURE III-4